

School Days: Going to School in One Room



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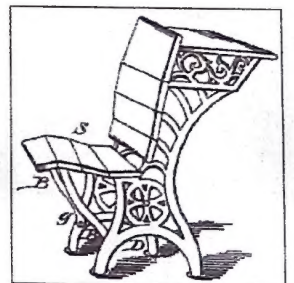


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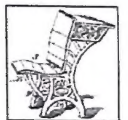
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Your School Today

Modern shot of a classroom and school today

Look around your classroom. What do you see? What kind of equipment is there? How many students are in your class? What does your teacher do? What do you do in your classroom today. What does your school building look like? What kinds of things are in your playground?



Schools Long Ago

The first schools did not have a bell to announce recess. The teacher banged a book on a window sill. Is that any way to treat a book?



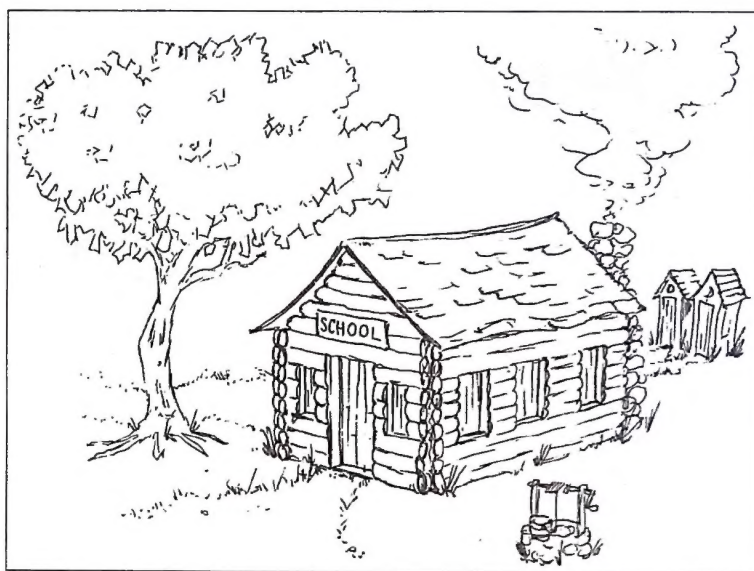
Let's go back to the earliest days of Battle Creek. Most children lived on the farms and went to small one-room schools. The classrooms looked very different than yours today. Desks and seats were very simple. Boards were fastened to the walls to make desks. Other boards with wooden legs were used for seats. The text books were papers the schoolmaster had copied by hand.



The First Schools



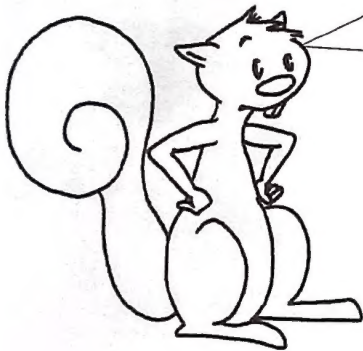
Did you know
that now we
call Goguac
Prairie
Lakeview?



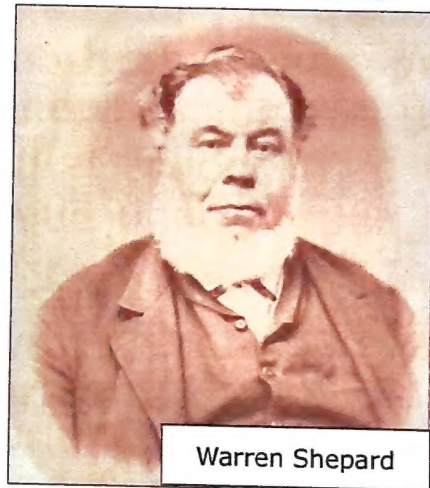
An early law in the Michigan **Territory** said that when there were at least 50 families living nearby, they had to build a school. Battle Creek's first schoolhouse was built in 1834. Children came from the village and from the **Goguac Prairie**. As more people moved here, more schools were built. By the end of the **decade**, most areas around Battle Creek had at least one school.



The First Schoolhouse



The first school was built from logs because Sands McCamly had not yet built his saw mill on the millrace.



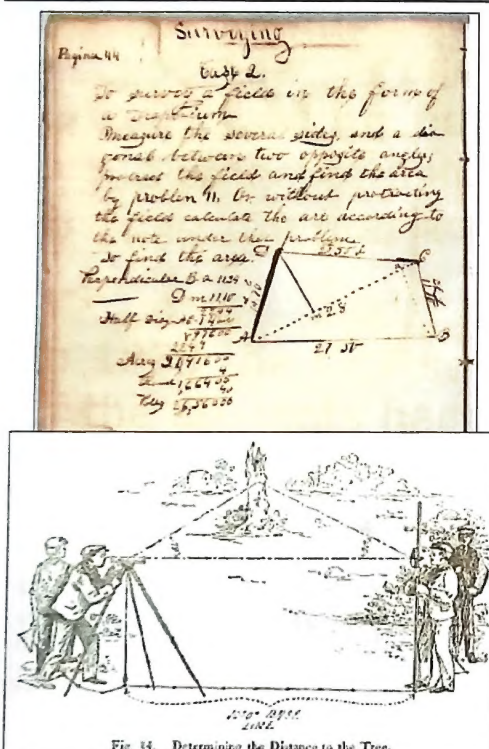
Warren Shepard

The first school was built of logs cut from the nearby forest. Warren Shepard was the first schoolmaster. He had seven students in his school. Schoolhouses were more than just classrooms. Church services and village social events were also held there. Since it was on an Indian trail, Potawatomi sometimes dropped in to visit classes.



Shepard's Lessons

This is Shepard's lesson on surveying.

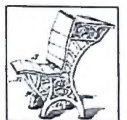


This picture shows people actually surveying. They are measuring the land to make a map. Doesn't it look a lot like the page from Shepard's notebook?

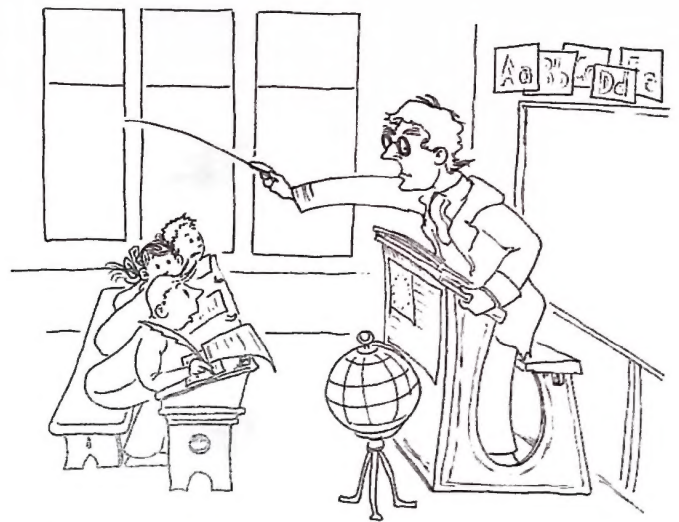


In his school, Warren Shepard taught many different subjects. He kept a notebook where he wrote about the lessons he taught. He wrote about **surveying**, **arithmetic**, reading and writing. There are 25 pages of notes just on "sentences".

In his notebook he said, "A **sentence** is an **assemblage** of words making complete sense."



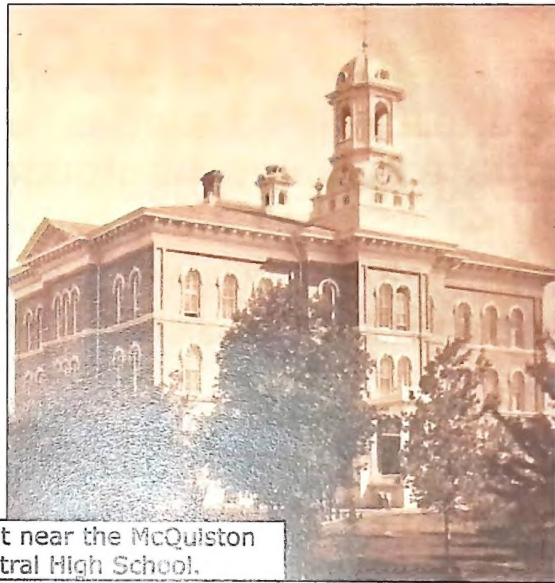
The Goguac Prairie School



In 1838 the first school in Goguac Prairie opened. Some of the students had textbooks, **slates** and **slate pencils**, as well as **quill** pens and writing books. There were no blackboards. Children read aloud in the morning and practiced writing or **penmanship** in the afternoon. They studied spelling twice a day. Older children learned arithmetic on their own and then checked their answers with their teacher.



The Union School



This is Union School. It was located right near the McQuiston Learning Center at Battle Creek Central High School.

The village grew and more schools were soon needed. In 1850 people from Battle Creek, Bedford, Emmett and Pennfield joined together and built a Union School. This large school cost \$6,000 to build and held 1st through 12th grades. Erastus Hussey, former mayor and conductor of the local Underground Railroad, was an important leader in building this school.



The City Schools



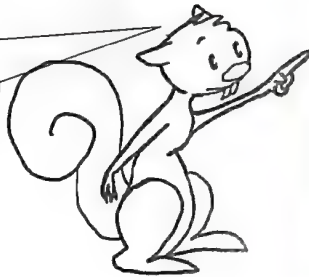
This is Franklin Elementary School one of the new schools that were built.

When Battle Creek became a city in 1859, all the elementary schools were **consolidated** and new schools were built. The new buildings had 4 large classrooms with blackboards. The teacher's desk was on a special platform in the back of the room. The new school had a bell. The rope was in the principal's office and it was a special reward for a student to ring it. Outside an oak fence enclosed the separate playgrounds for boys and girls.



The Kane School

There is a one-room school you can still visit. It is called Kane School.



Many one-room schools were still being built in the country around Battle Creek. Kane School was built at the corner of Gethings and Helmer roads in the 1870s. This one-room school was used until children began attending the new Lakeview school in 1949. Kane School was no longer needed and it was moved several times. Kane School is now at Historic Adventist Village.



Inside Kane School



In a one-room school all the grades were together in the same large room. Most school rooms had a blackboard, a globe, maps, a library bookcase, a stove to heat the room and pictures of presidents Washington and Lincoln. There were shelves where lunch buckets were kept. Sometimes the seats were long benches and the desks were tables used by several students at the same time.



Uriah Smith's Invention



There are
some of these
desks inside
Kane School.
You can still
sit in them!



This ad shows that the desks were
made to fit all ages of students.

In 1874 Uriah Smith from Battle Creek **invented** a school desk and chair combination that was used in many local schools. The seat folded up automatically when the student stood up. So even when a student had his hands full of books, the "seat takes care of itself." The Union School Furniture Company factory, where these desks were made, was near the W. K. Kellogg Foundation building.



Getting to School



Parents did not take their children to school and there was no such thing as a school bus. Kids even walked in the snow!



There were many different ways for students to get to and from school every day. The schools were built every few miles so many students walked, sometimes as far as two miles each way. That was a short distance in those days. Other students rode a horse or their bicycle, sometimes called a **"wheel,"** to school.



The School Year



In the 1890s many children only went to school from October to March. For the rest of the year they worked on the family farm. They fed the chickens, gathered eggs, carried wood, weeded the garden, picked berries and helped with canning. There was often a summer session for children too young to do farm work.



The School Day



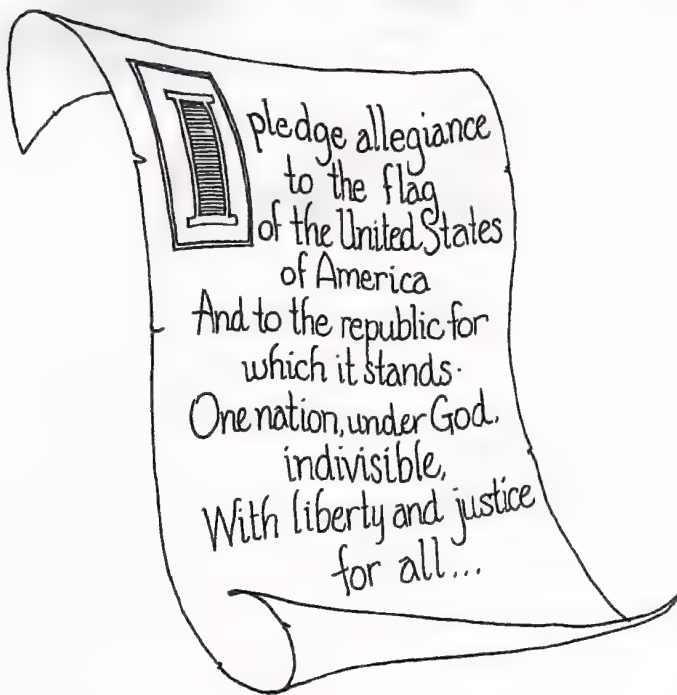
I never
knew the
teacher
had so
many
jobs!



Students went to school from 9:00 a.m. to 3:50 p.m. There were two 15 minute recesses during the day and an hour for lunch. The teacher was responsible for all the school jobs. There was no principal, secretary, lunch lady, custodian, playground supervisor or school nurse. Students had to help clean the school, carry the water and gather firewood for the stove.



The Pledge of Allegiance

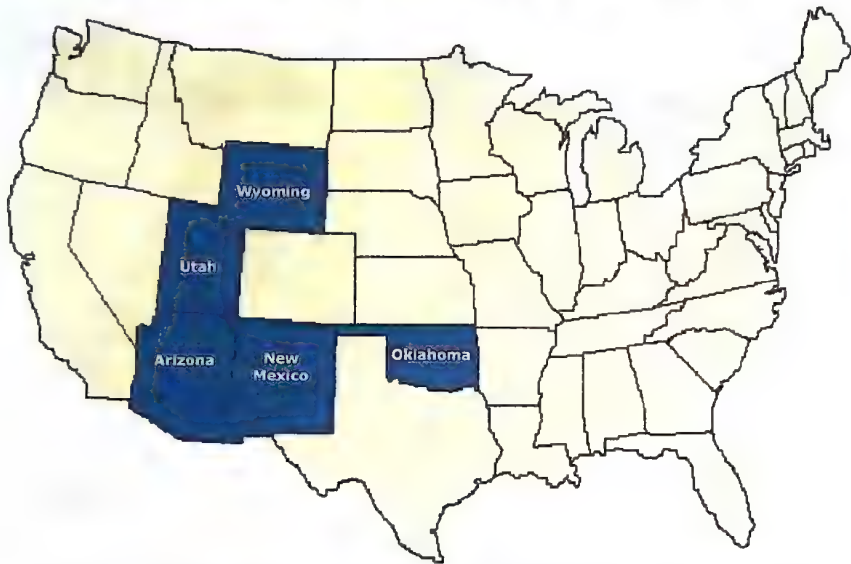


This is the Pledge today. Can you tell which words were changed and added in 1954?

Beginning in 1892 the Kane School children started their day with something new - The **Pledge of Allegiance**. They said: "I pledge allegiance to my flag and the republic for which it stands, one nation, **indivisible**, with liberty and justice for all." In 1954 the Congress of the United States changed and added new words to the Pledge.



The American Flag

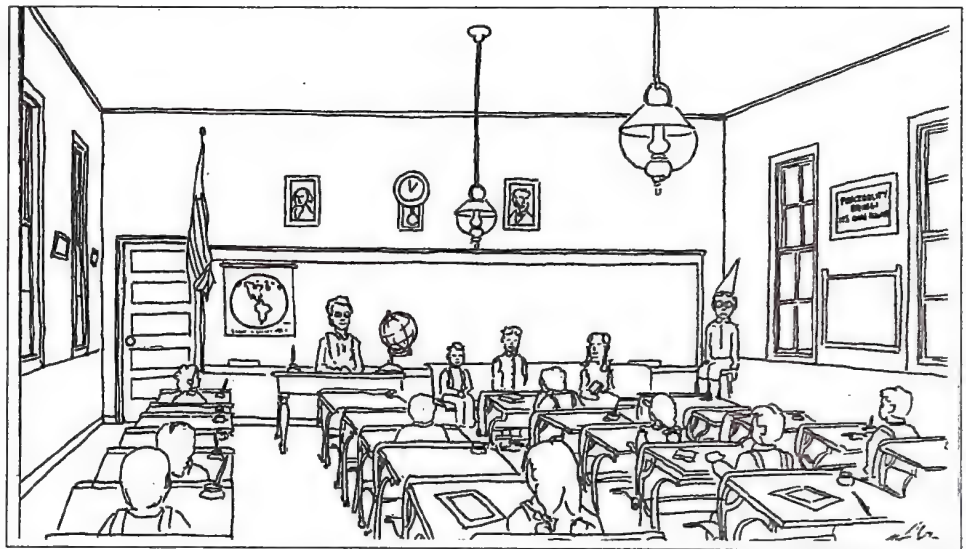


The flag the Kane School students saluted in 1892 had 44 stars. The territory of Wyoming had just been added as a new state. The next territories to become states were Utah, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona, Alaska and Hawaii. Today the flag has 50 stars to represent the 50 states of the United States.



Strict Rules

I wonder what he did to make the teacher punish him by making him wear the "dunce cap"?



Teachers were very strict. Students had to keep their eyes on the front of the room or on their work. They had to sit up straight. There was no talking and no smiling. Students who broke the rules were punished at school and often at home later. They might have to wear a **dunce** cap while standing in the corner, or stand with their nose touching the blackboard. The teacher might strike their palm with a ruler.



Fun and Games



During recess children played simple games that needed little or no equipment. Outside they played leap frog, swinging, see-saw, baseball, hide and seek, tag, kick the can, duck-duck-goose or Simon Says. They might jump rope, play jacks, or drop clothespins in bottles. When it was time for them to return to class, the teacher rang the school bell.



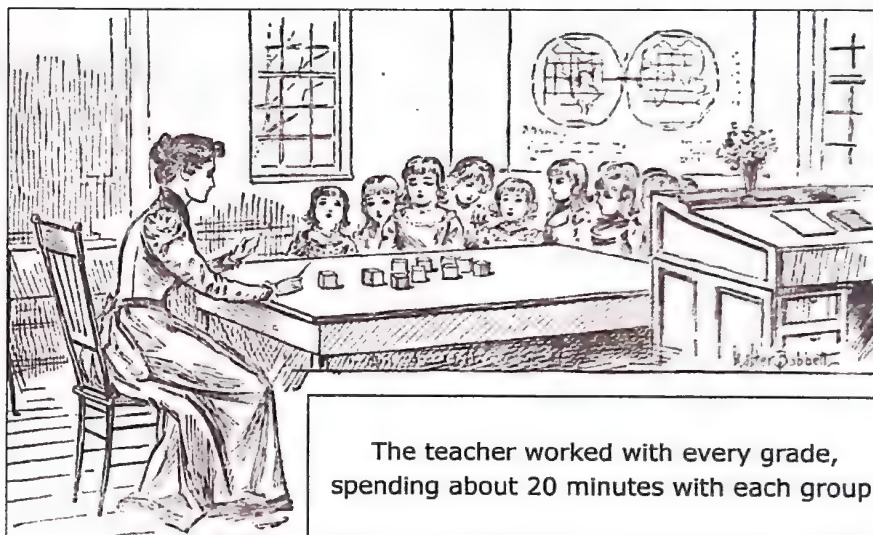
Rainy Day Games



When it rained or was too cold to play outside, children stayed inside and played paper games like Hangman or Tic Tac Toe. They also played Hide the Thimble (Hot or Cold) or Who's Got the Button. Sometimes they would sing or play games like Musical Chairs.



Lessons Learned



Most children learned reading, writing, spelling, penmanship, arithmetic, geography and language. Older students helped the younger students. In the morning the young children practiced reading, slate writing and copying letters and numbers. In the afternoon they did more slate work, reading and spelling. Students also did recitations, or reading aloud, from famous stories or poems.



What's for Lunch?

There was no cafeteria in a one-room school. Children brought their lunch in a tin bucket or basket. They could bring a sandwich or an apple, a boiled egg, a carrot or leftovers from dinner. Sometimes they brought a baked potato that also kept their hands warm in the winter. Everyone drank water from the same bucket, using the same dipper.



The End of an Era



This is the Beckley School at Helmer and Beckley roads. It was built in 1859 and did not close until 1957. It was one of the last one-room schools still that was being used around Battle Creek. Children attended school here for 98 years, which is almost a full **century**.



To Learn More



There is an Historic Marker downtown on the spot where the first log schoolhouse in Battle Creek was built. It is on West Michigan Avenue, across the street from Erasuts Hussey's Historic Marker and near Mill Race Park.



You can visit Kane School at Historic Adventist Village at W. VanBuren and Wood streets.

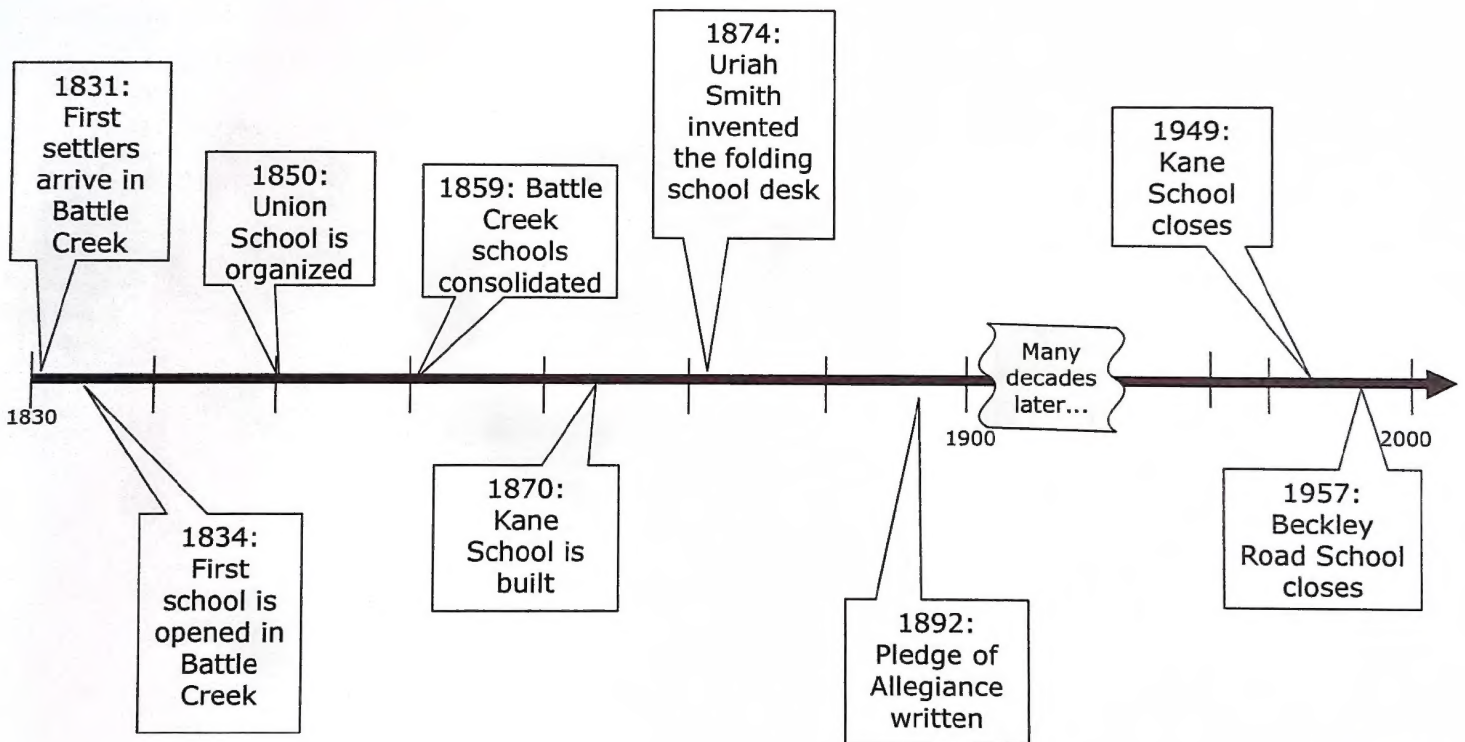


See the display on early schools at Kimball House Museum at 196 Capital Avenue, NE.

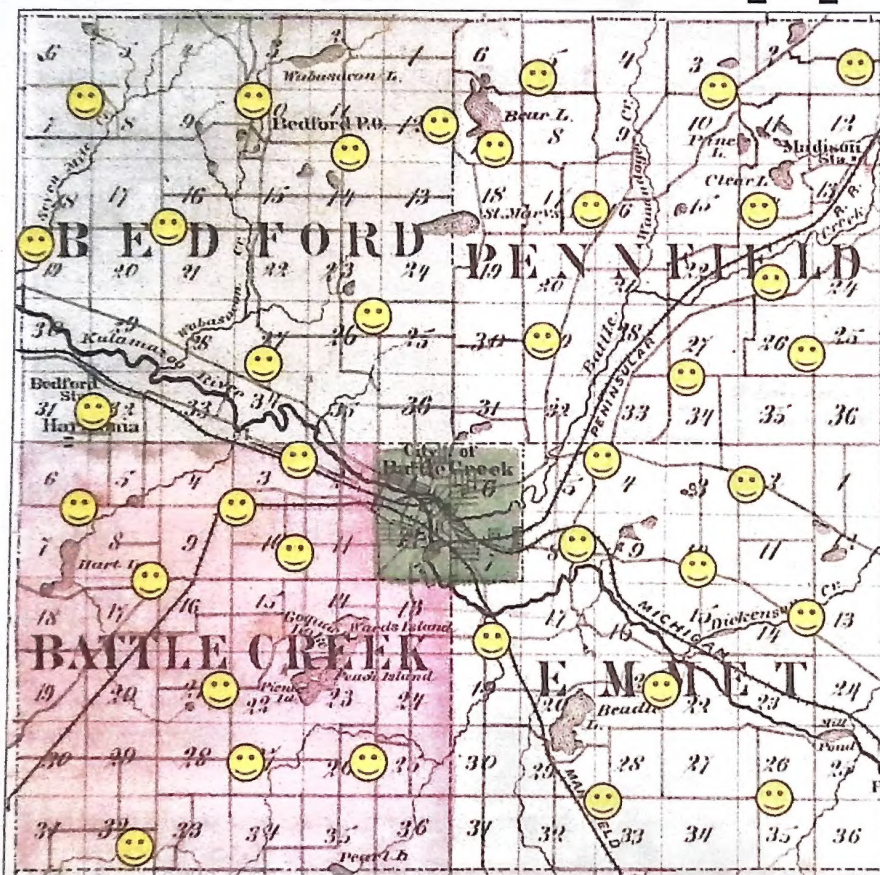




When it Happened



Where It Happened



There are 37 one-room schools on this map.

There were a lot of one-room schools around Battle Creek. Can you count and tell me how many there were?





Glossary

Allegiance – to be faithful or loyal to a country, friends, beliefs

Arithmetic – addition, subtraction, multiplication, division

Assemblage – putting all the parts together. In a sentence, it is the words that are the parts.

Century – 100 years

Consolidated – to bring several parts of something together and make it one large unit

Decade – 10 years

Dunce – person who is slow to learn, or who is being punished for disobeying the rules

Goguac Prairie – area of Battle Creek around Lake Goguac, now called Lakeview. This was the first area settled near Battle Creek.

Indivisible – something that cannot be separated or divided

Invented – to make or discover something new

Penmanship – the skill of careful and beautiful cursive handwriting

Pledge – to make a promise

Quill – a bird's feather, used to make writing pen

Sentence – a group of words that make up a complete thought, with a subject and verb

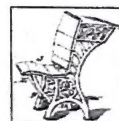
Slates – small blackboard on which students practiced writing

Slate Pencil – special kind of pencil used to write on slate boards

Surveying – the method of measuring land to make maps

Territory – a part of the United States not yet admitted to the Union as a state

"wheel" – an older word for bicycle





Credits

School Days: Going to School in One Room

Author: Susie Ramhap and Elizabeth Neumeyer
Consultants: Ann M. Case; Students and faculty of Prairieview Elementary School, Battle Creek, MI
Editors: Mary G. Butler and Elizabeth Neumeyer
Illustrations: Jim Middleton and Kurt Thornton
Layout and design: Jana Davis
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165 N. Washington Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49017
269-966-4157 www.heritagebattlecreek.org

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